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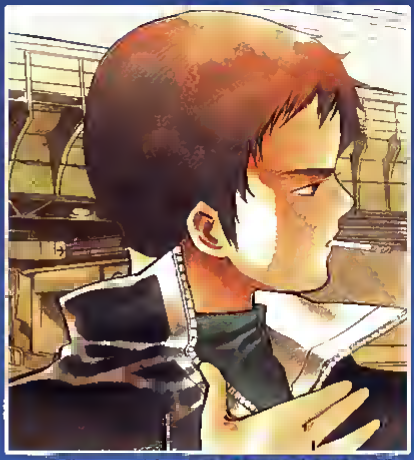

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KUROSAGI CHAPTER 98

STORY BY: TAKESHI NATSUHARA

ART BY: KUROMARU

TRANSLATOR: BLADEWEAVER
PROOFREADER: TASHIO!
EDITOR: ASUNA, DESIEGE211
QCER: ASUNA
RAW PROVIDER: PUBLIC RAWS

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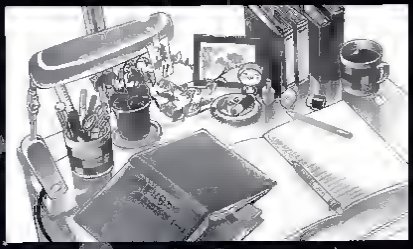

THE BLACK SWINDLER

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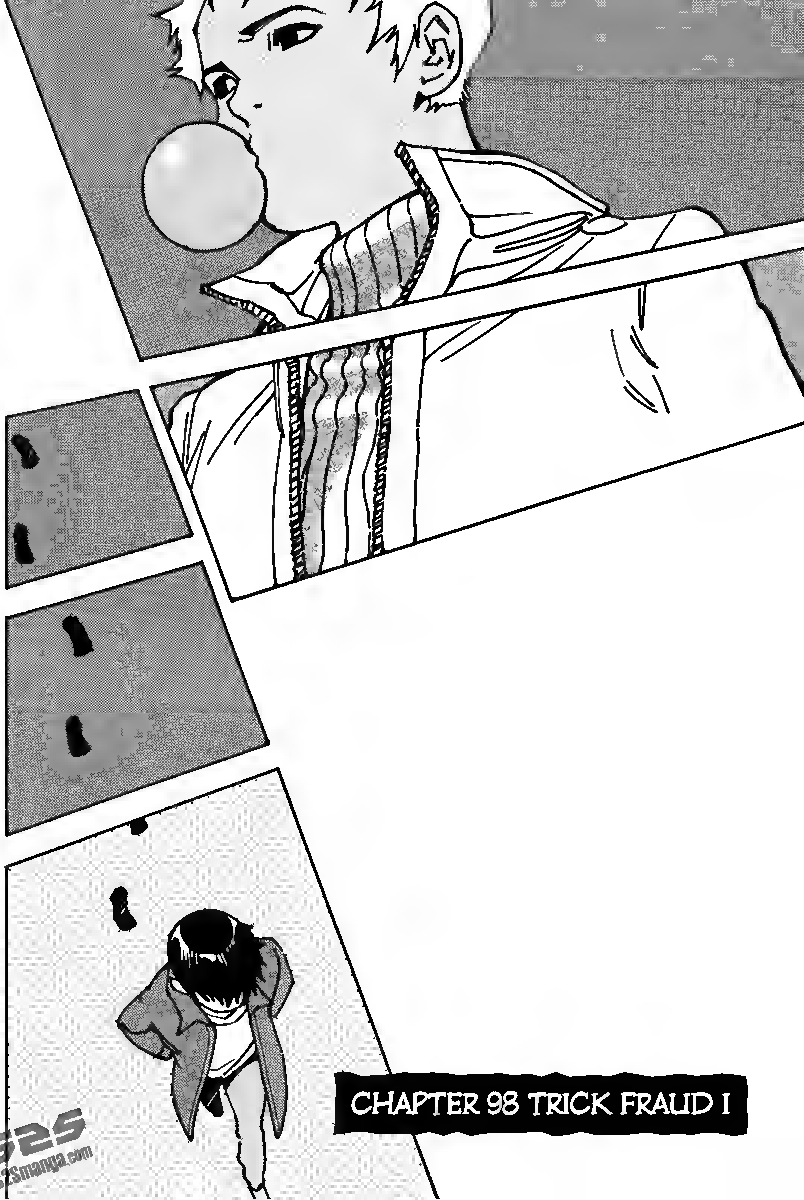
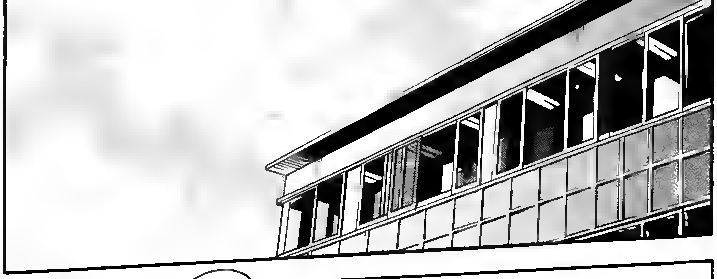
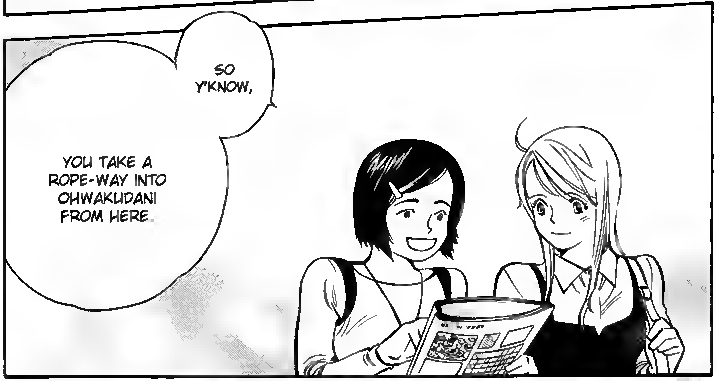
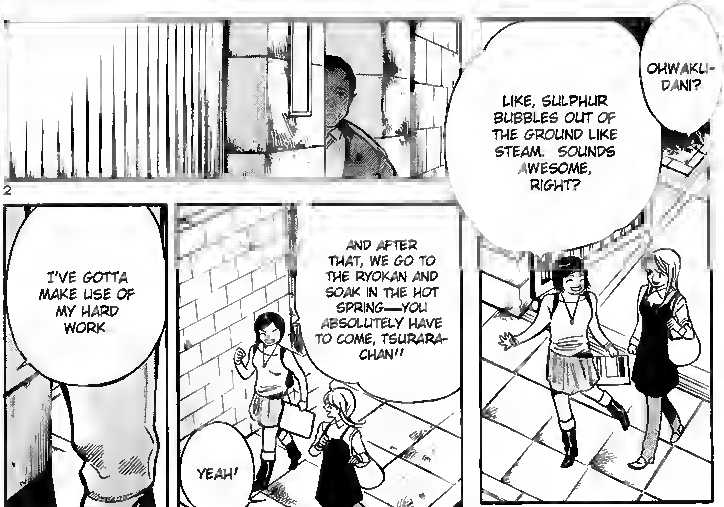

CHAPTER 98 TRICK FRAUD I



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OHWAKU-DANI?
LIKE, SULPHUR BUBBLES OUT OF THE GROUND LIKE STEAM. SOUNDS AWESOME, RIGHT?
I'VE GOTTA MAKE USE OF MY HARD WORK
AND AFTER THAT, WE GO TO THE RYOKAN AND SOAK IN THE HOT SPRING—YOU ABSOLUTELY HAVE TO COME, TSURARA-CHAN!!
YEAH!

TL: RYOKAN = TRADITIONAL INN

TSURARA
……
!?

WAIT, TSURARA!
C'MON, WAIT UP, TSURARA!
TSU-RARA...

"WHAT AM I .." DOES A FATHER NEED A REASON TO SEE HIS DAUGHTER?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN... I'M ASKING, HOW DID YOU COME TO TOKYO?!
LAST MONTH YOU SAID YOU WERE GOING TO YOUR PARENTS' HOME. SO WHERE DID YOU GET THE BULLET TRAIN FARE?

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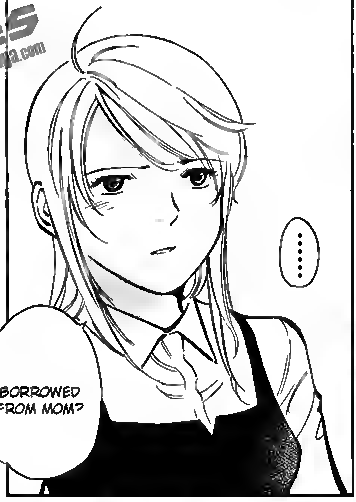
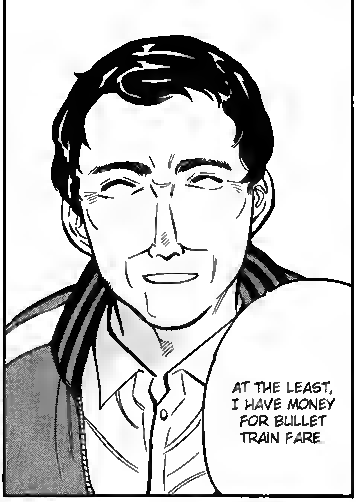
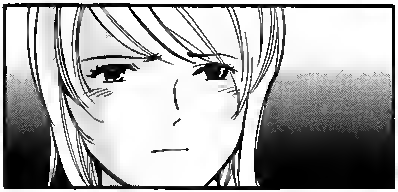
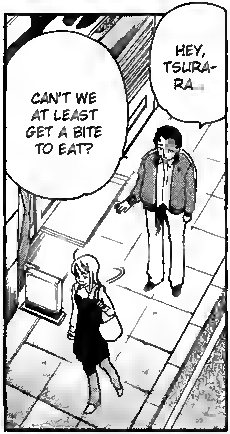
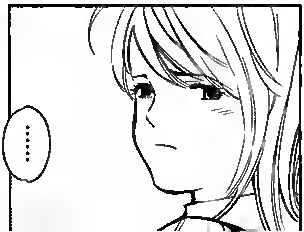


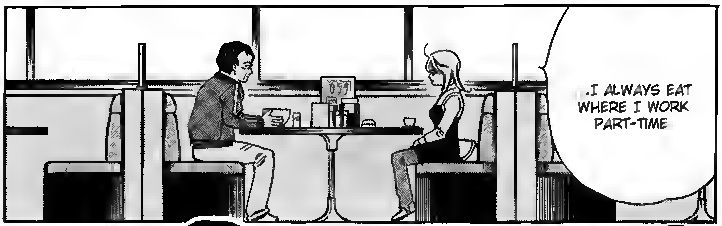




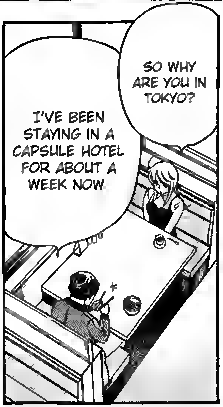




YOU REALLY FINE WITH JUST TEA?


..I ALWAYS EAT WHERE I WORK PART-TIME

I KNEW THAT EVEN WITHOUT BEING TOLD
I THOUGHT I'D GO BY YOUR PLACE, BUT YOUR MOTHER... SHE SAID TO LET YOU FOCUS ON YOUR STUDIES.


SO WHY ARE YOU IN TOKYO?
I'VE BEEN STAYING IN A CAPSULE HOTEL FOR ABOUT A WEEK NOW

ENTERPRISE ? NOT FINDING A JOB?
YEAH.
YOUR DAD HAS STARTED A NEW ENTERPRISE HERE IN TOKYO.
BUT, TSURARA,
I DON'T REALLY NEED LOANS SINCE IT'S ON THE INTERNET, I DON'T NEED AN OFFICE OR SHOP-FRONT.
YOU DON'T HAVE THE MONEY FOR THAT!
BUT WAIT, AN ENTER-PRISE?!

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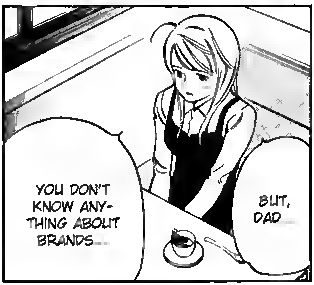
THEY ARE TRUSTWORTHY, SO IT'S FINE
AND I'VE MET WITH SOMEONE WHO GAVE ME SOME INSIDER TIPS
IT'S MORE LIKE I'M A HIRED STORE MANAGER IT WAS LISTED IN SOME RE-CRUITMENT INFORMA-TION,

IT'S A SORT OF INTERNET IMPORT BUSINESS...
WE PUT HIGH GRADE BRANDS THAT HAVEN'T MADE IT INTO THE GENERAL JAPANESE MARKET UP ON THE SITE.

LIKE I SAID,
I GOT INSIDER TIPS ON HOW TO SELL THE ITEMS; IT'S ALL GOOD.


YOU DON'T KNOW ANY-THING ABOUT BRANDS...
BUT, DAD...

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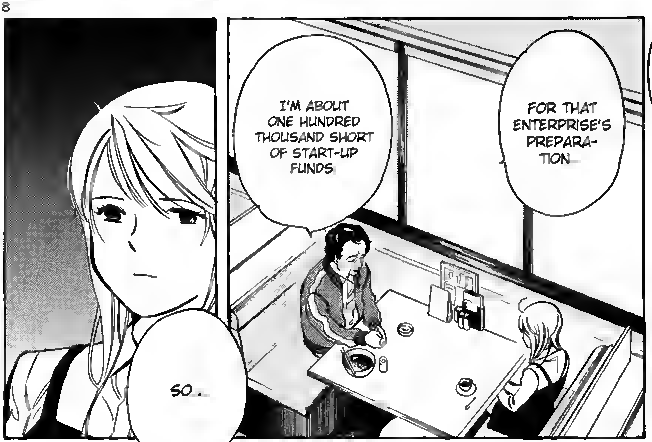
I'M ABOUT ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND SHORT OF START-UP FUNDS.
FOR THAT ENTERPRISE'S PREPARA-TION...
JUST...
SO...

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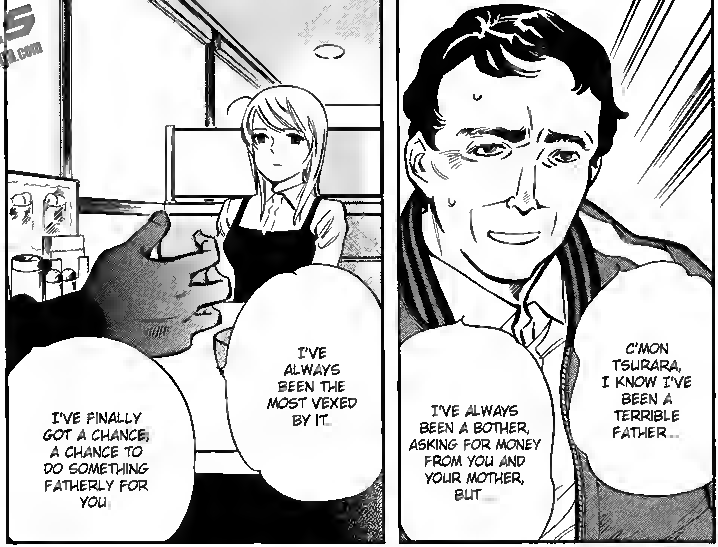
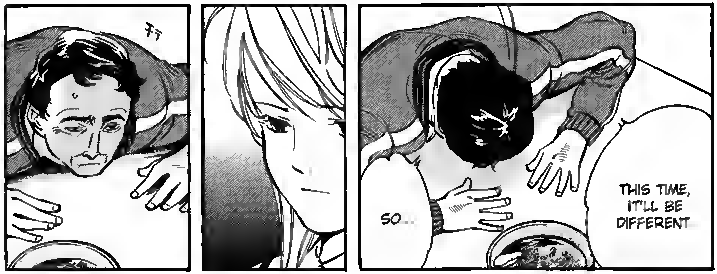
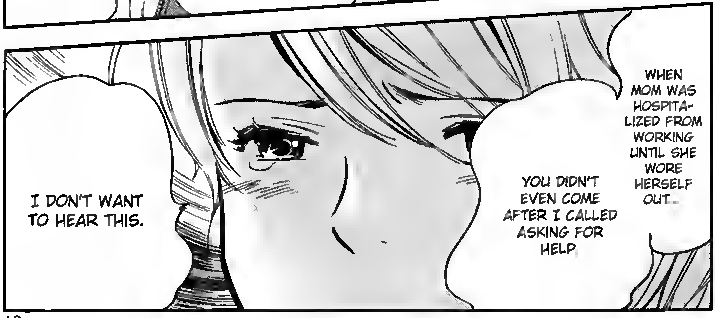
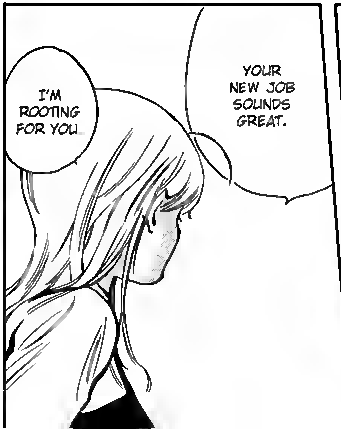

C'MON TSURARA, I KNOW I'VE BEEN A TERRIBLE FATHER...
I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A BOTHER, ASKING FOR MONEY FROM YOU AND YOUR MOTHER, BUT...
I'VE ALWAYS BEEN THE MOST VEXED BY IT.
I'VE FINALLY GOT A CHANCE; A CHANCE TO DO SOMETHING FATHERLY FOR YOU.



WAIT, THAT WAS...
YOU BORROWED MONEY USING YOUR BROTHER-IN-LAW AS THE GUARANTOR
AFTER A SINGLE WEEK, YOU RETURNED, HAVING LOST IT ALL
YOU TOOK WHAT SHE SAVED FROM HER PART-TIME JOB AND LEFT


I DON'T WANT TO HEAR THIS.
YOU DIDN'T EVEN COME AFTER I CALLED ASKING FOR HELP
WHEN MOM WAS HOSPITALIZED FROM WORKING UNTIL SHE WORE HERSELF OUT...

PLEASE STOP MEETING ME ONLY TO ASK FOR MONEY, THOUGH.


I'M ROOTING FOR YOU.
YOUR NEW JOB SOUNDS GREAT.

TSURARA!

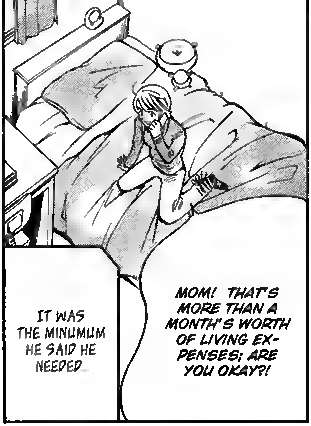
clang clang
OH
PERFECT TIMING
I CAN'T FIND MY STRAY CAT, KNOW ANY—
11
HELLO, MOM?
.....?
ピンポン

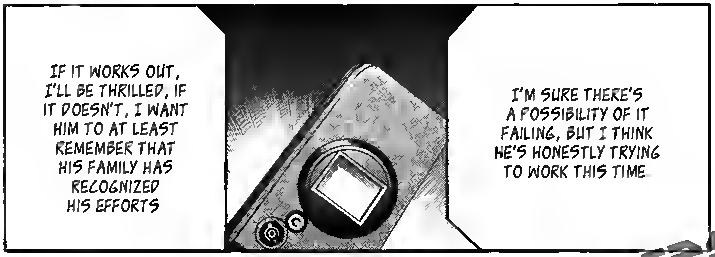
IT'S ME...
OH, TSUKARA. WHAT'S UP?
I MET WITH DAD TODAY
OH?
THAT MAN, I TOLD HIM NOT TO BOTHER YOU!
NO, IT'S FINE
IT'S JUST, HE SAID HE HAD STARTED A NEW ENTERPRISE, AND I WAS WORRIED...
I WONDERED IF YOU HAD ALREADY LENT HIM MONEY...

12

.....
YOU DID, DIDN'T YOU? HOW MUCH?
ABOUT A HUNDRED FIFTY THOU-SAND
WHA...
ONE HUNDRED FIFTY?!

IT'S FINE, IT'S NOT LIKE I EXPECT TO GET IT BACK, EVER.
AND YOU STILL GAVE HIM THE MONEY.
MOM, THIS ENTERPRISE ISN'T GUARANTEED TO SUCCEED.


IT WAS THE MINIMUM HE SAID HE NEEDED.
MOM! THAT'S MORE THAN A MONTH'S WORTH OF LIVING EXPENSES; ARE YOU OKAY?!

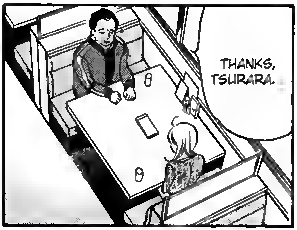

IF IT WORKS OUT, I'LL BE THRILLED, IF IT DOESN'T, I WANT HIM TO AT LEAST REMEMBER THAT HIS FAMILY HAS RECOGNIZED HIS EFFORTS
I'M SURE THERE'S A POSSIBILITY OF IT FAILING, BUT I THINK HE'S HONESTLY TRYING TO WORK THIS TIME.

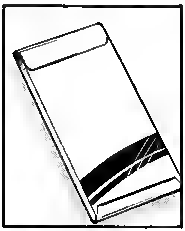
BUT, TSUKA-RA...
IT'S FINE...

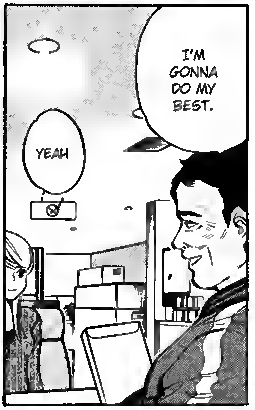
BOTH SCHOOL AND MY JOB HAVE BEEN GOING WELL RECENTLY.

I'LL DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS
MOM... CALL DAD, GET YOUR MONEY BACK.

TL: THAT'S A GUIDE BOOK FOR HAKONE. WHERE OHMAKUDANI IS.







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THREE DAYS LATER
ring ring ring
HELLO?
OH, TSUKAKA, IT'S MOM
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?
ABOUT THAT THING WITH YOUR FATHER, WHEN I TRIED TO CALL HIM...

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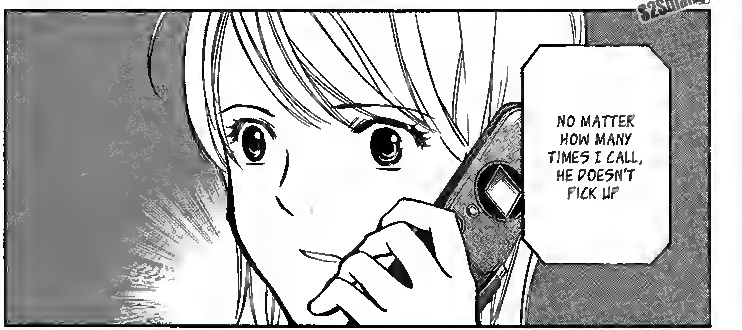
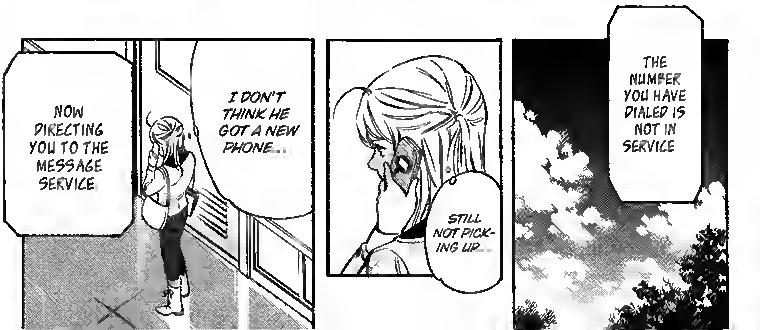
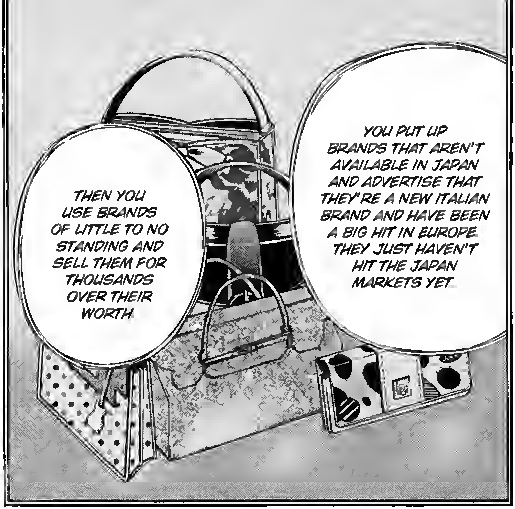
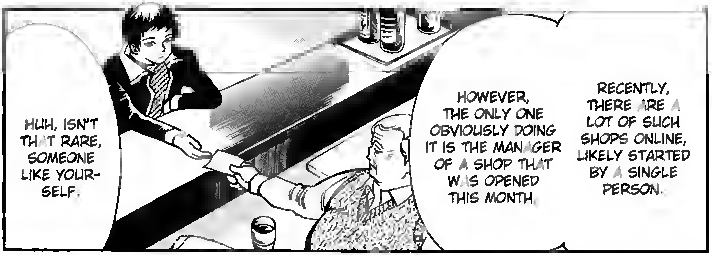


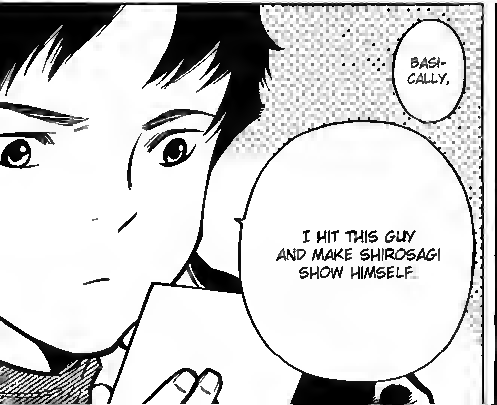

THE NUMBER YOU HAVE DIALED IS NOT IN SERVICE
STILL NOT PICK-ING UP...
I DON'T THINK HE GOT A NEW PHONE...
NOW DIRECTING YOU TO THE MESSAGE SERVICE

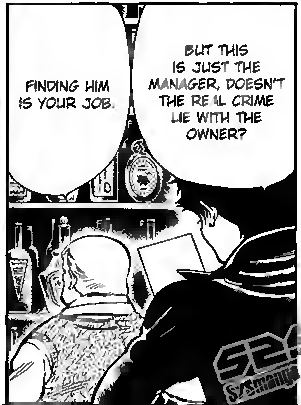
DAD, IT'S ME ARE YOU BUSY WITH WORK?
CALL ME WHEN YOU HEAR THIS.
IT'S A SORT OF INTERNET IMPORT BUSINESS.
.....
JUST WHAT HAPPENED, DAD?
IT'S A JOB THAT REQUIRES MINIMAL CAPITAL.
A SPECIAL OFFICE ISN'T NECESSARY... WORKING FROM HOME OR A NET CAFE IS ENOUGH.
SO...
16
EVEN A THIRD-RATE SHIROSAGI WOULDN'T USE IT.
IF IT GOES WELL, THE PROFITS ARE LARGE.
BECAUSE IT DEALS WITH BRAND ITEMS?

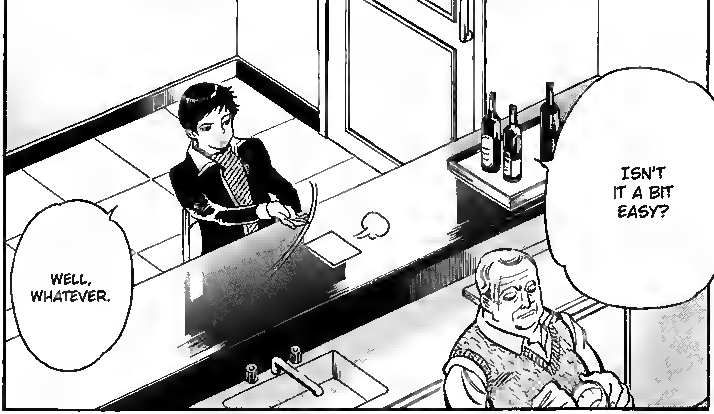
IT'S A SIMPLE TRICK, BUT SINCE STARTUP CAPITAL IS SO SMALL, PROFITS COME QUICKLY.
NOW I GET IT.


THEN YOU USE BRANDS OF LITTLE TO NO STANDING AND SELL THEM FOR THOUSANDS OVER THEIR WORTH.
YOU PUT UP BRANDS THAT AREN'T AVAILABLE IN JAPAN AND ADVERTISE THAT THEY'RE A NEW ITALIAN BRAND AND HAVE BEEN A BIG HIT IN EUROPE. THEY JUST HAVEN'T HIT THE JAPAN MARKETS YET.


HUH, ISN'T THAT RARE, SOMEONE LIKE YOURSELF.
HOWEVER, THE ONLY ONE OBVIOUSLY DOING IT IS THE MANAGER OF A SHOP THAT WAS OPENED THIS MONTH.
RECENTLY, THERE ARE A LOT OF SUCH SHOPS ONLINE, LIKELY STARTED BY A SINGLE PERSON.


BASICALLY,
I HIT THIS GUY AND MAKE SHIROSAGI SHOW HIMSELF.


FINDING HIM IS YOUR JOB.
BUT THIS IS JUST THE MANAGER, DOESN'T THE REAL CRIME LIE WITH THE OWNER?


ISN'T IT A BIT EASY?
WELL, WHATEVER.

I'LL OUTPERFORM HIM UNTIL HE RETIRES
THAT SHOULD DO IT.